

As collective bargaining rights for public employees seem on the verge of getting severely curtailed in Wisconsin, contract extensions for public unions seem in vogue. The La Crosse city council gave unanimous approval of an extension for its largest union Thursday night. A two year extension with modest one percent per year annual raises and higher employee contributions to health and pension benefits. The contract extensions also include elimination of no-layoff provisions. Under the conditions, says union head Rich Smith, it was the best deal available.